AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims Renumberings

1.-11.   (CANCELED)

1 (12). (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of conducting an on-line bidding session, comprising:

storing registered bidding groups in a <u>computer accessible</u> database coupled to a processor in an auction computer,

5   each of the registered bidding groups including a list of associated bidders;

receiving bids from bidders on a plurality of remote computers;

determining a respective bidding group's total bid by

10   accumulating the bids received from bidders included in the respective bidding group's list of associated bidders; and

storing the determined total bid in the database.

2 13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 1, further comprising creating registration records in the database, each registration record corresponding to a bidder account and including a bidder name, a bidder identification and a financial

5   account number.

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3 14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 13, wherein receiving bids _from bidders_ includes receiving the respective bidder name and respective _bidder_ identification _from the bidders and_ the method further ~~comprising~~ _comprises_:

5   verifying_, using the processor_, whether the respective bidder name and respective identification match a registration record stored in the database; and

      recording a bid record in the database if the respective bidder name and the respective identification ~~number~~ have a
10 verified match.

4 15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 14, further comprising:

      determining if the ~~determined total~~ _respective bidding group's total_ bid exceeds a threshold, and if so declaring the
5 bidding group associated with the respective total bid a winning group;

      retrieving the recorded bid records associated with the respective total bid;

      determining at least one bidder account that corresponds
10 to the retrieved bid records; and

      charging the ~~determined bidder account~~ _at least one bidder account at least one of_ the bid amounts included in the bid records.

5 16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 12, wherein further comprising, after determining the total bid associated with the respective bidding group, sending the determined total bid over a computer network to at least one remote computer of at least one

5   bidder associated with the respective bidding group.

6 17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of conducting an auction comprising

registering a plurality of bidding groups;

receiving bids from bidders, each bid including a

5   respective bid designation corresponding to one of the plurality of bidding groups;

associating each bid with at least the one of the plurality of bidding groups corresponding to the respective bid designation; and

10 declaring a winning bidding group for the auction from the plurality of bidding groups based upon the bids associated with each bidding group; and

displaying the winning bidding group for bidders to view.

7 18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 17, wherein each bidding group has a corresponding total bid amount and each

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bid further includes a respective bid amount that is contributed to the total bid amount for ~~a~~ the corresponding bidding group.

8 ~~19~~. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim ~~18~~ 7, wherein the winning bidding group has the largest total bid amount at the end of ~~the~~ a bidding session of the auction.

9 ~~20~~. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim ~~18~~ 7, further comprising displaying ~~of~~ the total bid amount for one or more of the plurality of bidding groups.

10 ~~21~~. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim ~~17~~ 6, wherein ~~the~~ registering ~~a~~ the plurality of bidding groups uses at least one central computer coupled to a network.

11 ~~22~~. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim ~~21~~ 10, wherein the network comprises the Internet.

12 ~~23~~. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim ~~21~~ 10, wherein the network comprises one or more communication lines.

13 ~~24~~. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim ~~21~~ 10, further comprising using one or more remote computers coupled to the network to receive bids.

14 25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 17,
wherein the auction is on-line.

15 26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 17,
further comprising creating one or more bidder accounts.

16 27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 17,
wherein associating each bid with at least one of the plurality of
bidding groups comprises bid pooling.

17 28. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 17,
wherein the auction continues until a pre-defined threshold occurs.

18 29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 28, wherein
the pre-defined threshold is comprises a period of time.

19 30. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 28, wherein
the pre-defined threshold is comprises a minimum bidding activity.

20 31. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of conducting an
auction, comprising:

registering a plurality of bidding groups;

receiving bids from bidders, each bid including a bid
designation corresponding to one of the plurality bidding groups;

contributing a respective bid amount in each bid to at least one total bid amount corresponding to at least one of the plurality of bidding groups; ~~and~~

declaring a winning bidding group from the plurality of

10 bidding groups; and

notifying the bidders that the winning bidding group has been declared.

21 ~~32.~~ (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim ~~31~~ 20, wherein the winning bidding group has the largest total bid amount at the end of the bidding session.

22 ~~33.~~ (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim ~~31~~ 20, further comprising using at least one central computer coupled to a network to register ~~a~~ the plurality of bidding groups.

23 ~~34.~~ (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim ~~33~~ 22, wherein the network comprises the Internet.

24 ~~35.~~ (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim ~~33~~ 22, wherein the network comprises one or more communication lines.

25/36. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 22, further comprising using one or more remote computers coupled to the network to receive bids.

26/37. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 20, wherein the auction is on-line.

27/38. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 20, further comprising creating one or more bidder accounts.

28/39. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 20, wherein contributing the respective bid amount in each bid to at least one total bid amount corresponding to at least one of the plurality of bidding groups comprises bid pooling.

29/40. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 20, further comprising displaying ~~of~~ the total bid amount for one or more of the plurality of bidding groups.

30/41. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 20, wherein the auction continues until a pre-defined threshold occurs.

31/42. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The methods of claim 30, wherein the pre-defined threshold is a period of time.

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32 43. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 41, [30]

wherein the pre-defined threshold is a minimum bidding activity.

Please add the following new claims:

33 44. (NEW) The method of claim 31, [20] wherein the winning

bidding group is declared based upon a total bid associated with

the winning bidding group exceeding a pre-defined threshold.

34 45. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 44, [33]

wherein the pre-defined threshold comprises a minimum price for a

property being auctioned.